

## Water Contact Diseases

**Leptospirosis** – Wading, swimming, other contact with water/mud contaminated with infected animal urine; unknown number of cases could occur

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – fever, chills, nausea
- 1-7 days hospitalization

Prevention: Do not swim/wade in unapproved water; wash skin and clothing after exposure to freshwater streams/ponds.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

### Short-term health risks

- High heat and humidity in the south
- Contaminated water with raw sewage

### Long-term health risks

- Air pollution in urban and industrialized areas
- Contaminated water from industrial pollutants

## HAZARDOUS ANIMALS AND PLANTS

**Venomous Snakes** – High incidence of snakebite deaths in country; numerous land- and coastal-dwelling deadly snakes; death within hours: seek urgent medical attention!

Prevention – Do not handle *any* snake.

**Other Reptiles and Mammals** – Aggressive lizards, crocodiles, leopards, elephants, monkeys, bears, and wild pigs present in many habitats

Prevention – Do not feed or handle *any* animal.

**Centipedes, Scorpions, Spiders** – May be large, numerous, and/or have potentially lethal venom

Prevention – Shake out boots/bedding/clothing prior to use; never walk barefoot; avoid sleeping on the ground; seek medical attention if bitten/stung.

**Leeches** – Nuisance in freshwater bodies and forests

Prevention – DEET on exposed skin

**Marine Animals** – Numerous poisonous sea snakes, rays, fish, starfish, shellfish, jellyfish, anemones, sea nettles/urchins

Prevention – Swim at approved beaches; do not handle; seek medical attention if stung/bitten.

**Hazardous Plants** – Numerous toxic plants; skin/lung irritation if touched/burned; poisoning if chewed/eaten

## Hazardous Animals and Plants (Continued)

Prevention – Do not touch, chew, eat, or burn unfamiliar plants; wash contaminated skin/clothing after contact.

### HIGH ELEVATIONS

The south central part of Sri Lanka is hilly and mountainous, with elevations between 3,000 and 8,200 feet above sea level.

Operations at 6,000 feet can impact unit and individual effectiveness.

Signs of **altitude sickness**: headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, fatigue, irritability, coughing

Acclimatization:

- Staged ascent: Ascend to moderate altitude (5,000–8,000 feet) and remain there for 3 days before ascending higher.
- Graded ascent: Limit daily altitude to allow partial acclimatization. Spend 2 nights at 9,000 feet and limit to no more than 1,000 feet per day above each night's sleep.

Treatment: The preferred method to treat any high altitude illness is to evacuate the individual to a lower altitude. See GTA 08-05-060, *A Soldier's Guide to Staying Healthy at High Elevations*.

### DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED

Prepared by:



U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion & Preventive  
Medicine

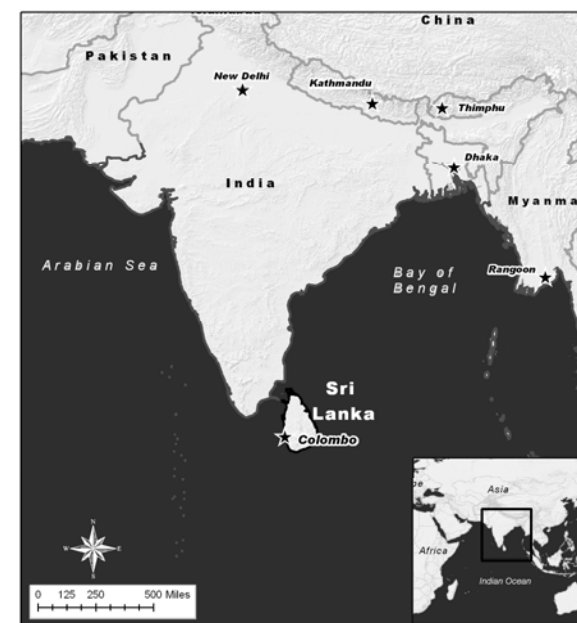
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SHG 037-0505

## DEPLOYMENT HEALTH GUIDE: SRI LANKA



This country-specific guide should be used in conjunction with [GTA 08-05-062, \*Guide to Staying Healthy\*](#), and is intended to provide information that can help reduce your risk of Disease and Non-battle Injuries (DNBI) when deployed. The health threat and countermeasure information is based on the most current data available from U.S. Department of Defense medical agencies at the time of production. In addition to the information in this guide, you should also receive force health protection, health threat, and preventive medicine countermeasures training/briefings prior to and, as required, throughout the length of your deployment.

## SRI LANKA OVERVIEW

Location – Sri Lanka is an island in the Indian Ocean south of India. It is slightly larger than West Virginia.

Climate – Tropical climate with average daily temperatures between 87° F and 77° F. Cloudiness is persistent and extensive all year.

Humidity – 70 percent or greater all year

Rainfall – 100 to 220 inches in the southwestern plains and uplands; 50 to 75 inches in the north, central and southeastern plains

Terrain – Mountainous and hilly in South-Central Sri Lanka with 16 rivers radiating from the center of the island, providing a good drainage network

Forces of Nature – Seasonal flooding most likely during May through September during the monsoon season

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Sri Lanka is at **HIGH RISK\*** for infectious diseases. Without force health protection measures, mission effectiveness will be seriously jeopardized.

\*Based on a combination of all major infectious diseases that occur in a country, the Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center (AFMIC) assigns an **overall country risk level** of low, intermediate, high, or very high risk, as compared to other countries.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

### Food-borne and Water-borne Diseases

Consuming contaminated food, water, or ice

**Hepatitis A** – A potential attack rate of less than 1 percent per month among unvaccinated personnel if local food, water or ice is consumed

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – none to flu-like illness
- Severe, 1–4 weeks recovery, sometimes initially requiring hospitalization

**Diarrhea, bacterial** – A potential attack rate of 11 to 50 percent a month if local food, water or ice is consumed

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – loose, watery or explosive bowel movements

### Food-borne and Water-borne Diseases (Continued)

- 1–3 days recovery with antibiotics

**Typhoid/Paratyphoid fever** – A potential attack rate of 1 to 10 percent among unvaccinated personnel consuming local food, water or ice

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – fever, constipation, headache
- 1–7 days hospitalization

**Hepatitis E** – Rare cases possible among those consuming local food, water or ice

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – jaundice, fatigue, nausea, vomiting
- Severe, 1–4 weeks recovery, sometimes initially requiring hospitalization

Prevention: Consume only U.S. military-approved food, water, ice; **hepatitis A vaccine** and/or **typhoid vaccine**, if directed by medical authority.

### Vector-borne Diseases

**Dengue** – Significant number of cases possible

- Highest threat – In/around homes, especially in urban areas countrywide; year-round
- Symptoms – high fever, severe muscle pain, severe headache, rash; hospitalization likely
- Transmission – day-biting mosquitoes
- Debilitating, requiring 1–7 days of inpatient care

**Malaria** – Significant number of cases possible

- Threat – year-round, may be elevated during monsoon seasons
- Symptoms – vivax and falciparum malarias present with some drug-resistant strains; fever, chills, sweats; mild to severe including coma and death.
- Transmission – mosquitoes that bite from dusk to dawn
- 1–7 days hospitalization likely for mild cases; prolonged/intensive treatment for severe cases.

Others: **Chikungunya**, **Japanese encephalitis**, **rickettsioses (tick-borne)**, **murine typhus (flea-borne)**

Prevention: **DEET** on exposed skin; **permethrin-treated uniforms**; **permethrin-treated bed nets**; **malaria prevention pills** as prescribed (critical)

### Animal Contact Diseases

**Q Fever** – Breathing airborne dust contaminated with body fluids of barnyard animals; rare cases possible

- Threat year-round; rural areas
- Symptoms – none to flu-like illness
- 1–7 days hospitalization

**Rabies** – Exposure to virus-laden saliva of an infected animal through a bite, scratch or breathing airborne droplets; risk well-above U.S. levels

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Initial symptoms – pain, tingling, or itching from bite site; chills, fever, muscle aches
- Death likely in the absence of post-exposure prophylaxis

Prevention: Avoid contact with domestic animals/barnyards.

### Respiratory Diseases

**Tuberculosis** – Breathing contaminated air droplets from other people (coughing/sneezing)

- Highest threat from prolonged close contact with local populations
- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – none to cough, chest pain, breathlessness, night sweats
- Severe illness or death if not treated

Prevention – Avoid close contact with local populations; early detection/treatment reduces severity.

### Sexually Transmitted Diseases

**Gonorrhea/Chlamydia** – Unprotected sexual contact with infected person; high number cases possible

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms (in men) – none to burning sensation when urinating or discharge
- Symptoms (in women) – none to burning when urinating to increased vaginal discharge
- Mild; outpatient treatment

**HIV/AIDS** – Unprotected sexual contact with infected person; contaminated needles or blood into an open cut/membrane of an infected member; rare cases could occur

- Threat – year-round, countrywide
- Symptoms – weight loss, night sweats, fatigue, swollen lymph glands, sores
- Very severe for individual; death likely

Prevention – Abstinence or latex condoms